



Eggnog Safety

What makes eggnog unsafe?

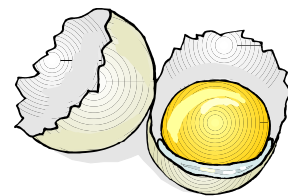
Eggnog can be unsafe to eat if the eggs in it are raw or only partially cooked. By not cooking the eggs to 160°F, bacteria such as Salmonella may be present. Salmonella can cause foodborne illness in anyone; however, children, the elderly, and individuals with compromised immune systems are especially vulnerable.

How can I make my eggnog safe?

If you are making eggnog at home there are several ways to make it safe. One of the easiest ways is to use pasteurized shell eggs in place of regular eggs in the recipe. Pasteurized shell eggs have been heated to a high enough temperature to kill harmful bacteria in the egg. They do not require any additional cooking to make them safe to eat. Pasteurized egg substitutes can also be used in place of eggs in the recipe. Substituting either of these products for fresh eggs make it very easy to make safe eggnog.

Some recipes require that raw, beaten egg whites be folded into the eggnog. If this is the case, use pasteurized egg whites.

If you decide to use unpasteurized eggs in your recipe, you should pasteurize them during the cooking process. To do this, combine at least two tablespoons of liquid from the recipe with each beaten egg or egg yolk in the recipe. For example, four egg yolks would be combined with eight tablespoons of liquid. Any type of liquid such as milk, cream, juice, or water can be used with the exception of oil and margarine. Cook the mixture over medium to low heat and stir constantly. Check the temperature with a food thermometer. To pasteurize the eggs, the mixture must reach 160°F or be brought to and held at 140°F for 3 ½ minutes. When the mixture reaches the proper temperature it should be thickened and coat a spoon. If the mixture gets too hot the eggs will curdle. If the eggs look like they are going to curdle, remove the mixture from the heat and stir rapidly until it cools. Return it to low heat and continue cooking. This method of pasteurization can be used in any recipe that calls for raw or partially cooked eggs, as long as there is enough liquid in the recipe.



Do I need to cook the eggnog that I buy from the grocery store?

Store bought eggnog has already been pasteurized and requires no further cooking.

References:

Partnership for Food Safety Education. Food Safety for Those Glorious Holiday Goodies. Accessed April 28, 2005 at http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/pubs/holiday_goodies2.pdf

Georgia Egg Commission. "Cook Up Some Old Favorites The New Way!"

The University of Georgia and Ft. Valley State University, the U.S. Department of Agriculture and counties of the state cooperating. The Cooperative Extension Service and the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences offer educational programs, assistance and materials to all people without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex or disability.

An Equal Opportunity Employer/Affirmative Action Organization Committed to a Diverse Work Force

FDNS-E-105

May 2005

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, The University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and the U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating.
Josef M. Broder, Intermim Dean and Director